

Message Text

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15

ACTION AGR-20

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12

CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-10 SS-15 STR-08

CEA-02 L-03 H-02 PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-12 RSR-01 /162 W

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R 170714 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0942

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CANBERRA 2763

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR/AS

SUBJ: WHEAT STABILIZATION PLAN

PASS AGRICULTURE FOR RUBEL

1. FEDERAL LABOUR CAUCUS LATE YESTERDAY REJECTED CABINET DECISION TO LIMIT ANNUAL WHEAT SUBSIDY LEVEL AT 15 MILLION DOLLARS AUSTRALIAN UNDER NEW WHEAT STABILIZATION SCHEME AND VOTED CONTINUATION OF PRESENT SCHEME FOR ONE YEAR WITH GUARANTEED EXPORT AND HOME CONSUMPTION PRICES ADJUSTED FOR HIGHER PRODUCTION COSTS.

2. EARLIER RURAL COMMITTEE OF CAUCUS HAD ALREADY INDICATED IT WOULD NOT GO ALONG WITH CABINET SUBMISSION, OBVIOUSLY BECAUSE OF STRONG POSSIBILITY DOUBLE DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT LATER THIS YEAR AND NEED TO AVOID ANTAGONISM RURAL SECTOR. PRIMIND MIN WRIEDT SUBSEQUENTLY STATED DECISION HAD BEEN MADE TO GIVE HIM TIME TO LOOK AT WHEAT STABILIZATION OBJECTIVELY AND DRAW UP PLANS FOR NEW LONGER TERM SCHEME TO OPERATE FROM DEC 1974.

3. WRIEDT ALSO SAID EXISTING SCHEME MIGHT BE IMPROVED AND STRESSED NO INTENTION OF DEPARTING FROM PRINCIPLE OF STABILIZATION. ONE PARTICULAR ISSUE TO BE EXAMINED WAS QUESTION OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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LONG TERM CREDIT SALES TO UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES AS HE DID NOT BELIEVE WHEAT GROWERS SHOULD CARRY FULL BURDEN OF SALES TO NATIONS UNABLE TO PURCHASE WITHOUT CONCESSIONAL TERMS. SENATOR WRIEDT WILL DISCUSS PROPOSAL TO EXTEND CURRENT SCHEME FOR ONE

YEAR WITH STATES AT AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL MEETING ON MAY 18,
AND WHEATGROWERS FEDERATION ON MAY 21. NO DOUBT PROPOSAL WILL BE
ACCEPTED. UNDER EXTENSION 200 MILLION BUSHELS TO BE COVERED
BY GUARANTEED EXPORT PRICE OF DOLLARS AUSTRALIA 1.60. HOME
CONSUMPTION PRICE SET TO BE DETERMINED AT AG COUNCIL MEETING
BUT PROBABLY CLOSE TO DOLLARS AUSTRALIAN 1.93 PROPOSED BY
WHEATGROWERS FEDERATION.

4. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT MINISTER WRIEDT WILL PRESENT DETAILED
PROPOSALS FOR A NEW SCHEME TO CAUCUS IN SEPT OR OCT.
ALTHOUGH DEFEAT OF CABINET DECISION WAS POLITICALLY SIGNIFICANT
IN VIEW RECENT CONFLICTS WITHIN PARTY ON RURAL POLICY, GOVERN-
MENT BELIEVES THAT ACTUAL SUBSIDY COST WILL NOT BE GREATER
THAN ANTICIPATED, AS WITH CURRENT HIGH WHEAT PRICES REQUIRED
SUPPORT FOR 1973/74 CROP WHEAT WILL PROBABLY BE LESS THAN
15 MILLION DOLLARS CEILING.
RICE

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